

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 SAIGON 11380 251353 Z

51

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 /026 W

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R 251155 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3681

INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

S E C R E T SAIGON 11380

EXDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR VS

SUBJECT: SUCCESSOR TO CANADA ON ICCS

REF: SAIGON 11303

1. LAM CONVENED A MEETING THIS AFTERNOON WITH AMBASSADOR IDRIS (INDONESIA), AMBASSADOR GAUVIN (CANADA), AND ME. HE OPENED THE MEETING BY MAKING A GRACEFUL SPEECH WITH REGARD TO CANADA' S FORTHCOMING WITHDRAWAL FROM THE ICCS AND CONCLUDED THAT WE HAD COME TOGETHER TO CONSIDER A POSSIBLE REPLACEMENT, STATING THAT MALAYSIA WAS A COUNTRY WITH MANY QUALIFICATIONS FOR A POSITION ON THE ICCS. HE THEN ASKED FOR OUR VIEWS.

2. AMBASSADOR IDRIS STATED THAT INDONESIA WOULD WELCOME MALAYSIA ON THE COMMISSION, BUT THAT IT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT THE MALAYSIAN ARMY LACKED SUFFICIENT OFFICERS OF APPROPRIATE RANK TO STAFF AN ICCS DELEGATION. HE ALSO DREW OUR ATTENTION TO THE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL PROBLEMS OF MALAYSIA WHICH HE BELIEVED WOULD PREVENT MALAYSIA' S PARTICIPATION.

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3. AMBASSADOR GAUVIN STATED THAT IT WAS NOT APPROPRIATE FOR CANADA TO HAVE VIEWS ON WHO ITS SUCCESSOR WOULD BE ON THE ICCS, BUT THAT CANADA WOULD DO ITS UTMOST TO ASSIST WHATEVER COUNTRY WAS CHOSEN IN ESTABLISHING ITSELF ON THE COMMISSION.

4. I SAID THAT WASHINGTON HAD GIVEN THIS PROBLEM SERIOUS CONSIDERATION AND HAD CONCLUDED THAT MALAYSIA WAS ADMIRABLY QUALIFIED.

5. FONMIN LAM THEN STATED THAT THE FORMER GVN AMBASSADOR IN KUALA LUMPUR HAD BROUGHT TO HIS ATTENTION THE PROBLEMS WHICH AMBASSADOR IDRIS HAD CITED AND THAT HE SHARED INDONESIA'S DOUBTS REGARDING MALAYSIA'S WILLINGNESS TO JOIN THE ICCS. HE ASKED IDRIS WHETHER INDONESIA HAD ANY SUGGESTIONS TO MAKE. AMBASSADOR IDRIS REPLIED THAT IRAN COULD BE CONSIDERED AN ASIAN COUNTRY, THAT ITS MILITARY PERSONNEL WERE VERY COMPETENT AND THAT IN HIS VIEW AN APPROACH TO IRAN WOULD BE MOST DESIRABLE. LAM AGREED ENTHUSIASTICALLY WITH THIS SUGGESTION. I PROPOSED PROCEEDING WITH AN APPROACH TO MALAYSIA, NOTING THAT IT WAS NATURAL FOR ANY COUNTRY TO RAISE DOUBTS AND OBJECTIONS WHEN CONFRONTED WITH A NEW MISSION OF THIS KIND. IT SEEMED TO ME DESIRABLE TO ESTABLISH WHETHER OR NOT MALAYSIA WOULD REFUSE BEFORE SOUNDING OUT ANY OTHER COUNTRIES. IT WAS THE CONSENSUS OF THE MEETING, HOWEVER, THAT GIVEN THE VIRTUAL CERTAINTY OF MALAYSIA DECLINING TO SERVE ON THE ICCS THE VIEWS OF WASHINGTON WOULD BE SOUGHT ON IRAN AS A POSSIBILITY. AS THE MEETING ENDED, LAM CONFIDED THAT IF GIVEN THE CHOICE BETWEEN MALAYSIA AND IRAN THE GVN WOULD INFINITELY PREFER IRAN. HE THEN MENTIONED BRAZIL AS ANOTHER COUNTRY WHICH THE GVN WOULD BE VERY PLEASED TO SEE ON THE ICCS.

6. COMMENT: IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO TELL HOW MUCH DISCREET ORIENTAL CONSULTATION HAS TAKEN PLACE ON THE SUBJECT OF MALAYSIA'S CANDIDACY, BUT THE GVN AND AMBASSADOR IDRIS APPEAR TO HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT MALAYSIA CANNOT AND WILL NOT ACCEPT.

7. I AM NOT SENDING THIS MESSAGE TO TEHRAN AS THE DEPART-
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MENT MAY WISH TO RAISE THIS QUESTION DIRECTLY WITH TEHRAN GIVING MORE BACKGROUND INFORMATION THAN IS CONTAINED IN THIS MESSAGE.

8. WE WOULD APPRECIATE THE DEPARTMENT'S PRELIMINARY COMMENTS ON THE FOREGOING.
WHITEHOUSE

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*** Current Classification *** SECRET

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